

Pete's Accomplishments in the 104th Congress

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Health Care and Seniors (top)

Medicare Reform. Led successful fight to prevent the majority party from destroying the Medicare program. The Republican-controlled Congress wanted to turn Medicare into a voucher type system which would not cover the cost of care and would have allowed doctors to increase balance billing (that is, charge extra for basic Medicare services) by an estimated \$6.8 billion a year. Stark provided the data, analysis, and information for the debate on Medicare which proved that the cuts proposed by the Medicare opponents were much more than needed to extend the life of the Trust Fund. The cuts were actually proposals to radically alter Medicare while providing windfalls to powerful lobby groups which would be able to profit from extra billing and the sale of unnecessary insurance products.

Health Insurance Portability. Led House of Representatives fight against anti-consumer provisions in the Kassebaum-Kennedy health portability bill. Stark's work in committee and on the floor helped build successful support for dropping the worst anti-consumer provisions in Kassebaum-Kennedy. Stark helped expose the weakening of medigap anti-duplication provisions, harm to health system from open-ended Medical Savings Account tax proposal, and anti-consumer provisions of malpractice award limitations. In conference committee, Stark helped ensure that long-term care insurance pays for assistance with activities of daily living. The final agreement includes Stark provisions to weed out fraud and abuse in Medicare, saving the government over \$2.6 billion.

Drug Company's Legislative "Gift." Exposed special interest provision secretly inserted in conference committee by Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott that provided a patent windfall to one drug company for one special product--Lodine. Exposure of this improper legislative "gift" led to passage of separate resolution deleting the provision and saving health care consumers tens of millions of dollars.

Mental Health Care Parity. Led effort to include in the House of Representatives Kassebaum-Kennedy bill the mental health parity amendment previously adopted by the Senate. Introduced free-standing mental health parity bill in the House of Representatives to assure that mental health expenses would be treated like other types of medical expenses.

Medicare Select. In 1995, when Congress passed legislation providing for a national Medicare Select program (a program whereby workers can transition from managed care in their employment to managed care in Medicare), Stark helped ensure the inclusion of consumer protections. Further, Stark fought to ensure that Medicare select be tested to prove it did not harm enrollees or increase Medicare costs.

OB-GYN Funding. Worked with the Medicare agency to change its doctor-payment rules, to make it clear that payment would be provided for training OB-GYNs at women's clinics and ambulatory centers

Columbia HCA Investigation. Helped initiate a federal investigation of whether a large for-profit hospital chain -- Columbia HCA -- is violating anti-referral and anti-kickback laws to entice doctors to refer profitable cases to Columbia hospitals.

Investigation is on-going.

Medicare Fraud and Abuse. Caused Medicare agency to issue new rule stopping fraud and abuse by hospitals setting up distant doctor practices, home health agencies, and other services and increasing costs to the health system by loading their overhead costs into distant and unrelated downstream subsidiaries.

Drug Conspiracy Investigation. Provided information to HHS and Justice about possible conspiracy by major drug manufacturers and suppliers to inflate the average wholesale price of drugs and to charge Medicare and other health payers billions of dollars in extra drug prices. A criminal and/or civil monetary penalty investigation is underway at the Department of Justice.

HMO Regulations Preserved. Exposed effort by the managed care lobby to weaken Stark-passed 1990 laws and regulations limiting HMO financial incentives to doctors NOT to serve patients. A front-page New York Times story helped ensure that the regulations will go into effect on January 1, 1997, providing important protections to HMO members against denial of care.

Kidney Dialysis. Initiated General Accounting Office study on how to improve quality of care for America's 200,000 kidney dialysis patients.

Organ Donation. While serving on the Congressional Task Force on Organ and Tissue Donation, Stark continues to be a leader fighting for better awareness and education concerning organ donation. Stark introduced a bill, H.R. 2551, which would give a Congressional Medal of Honor to individuals donating their organs.

Consumer Insurance Protection. Many of Stark's consumer protection provisions relating to long-term care insurance policies and managed health care organizations (HR 1457, HR 1707) were adopted in the Kassebaum-Kennedy health care reform bill.

Medicare Anti-fraud. Stark's criticism of the House of Representatives-passed Medicare anti-fraud provisions helped cause a major strengthening of these proposals in the House of Representatives-Senate Conference. Obtained letters from HHS, OIG, Department of Justice, General Accounting Office and Federal Trade Commission highlighting serious 'pro-fraud' problems in the Republican bill.

Medigap Insurance Policies. Stark requested a General Accounting Office report on the compliance of medigap companies in paying out required level of medical benefits. The study showed that Stark's amendment requiring a minimum of 65% and 75% payout on individual and group policies would save seniors about \$125 million a year beginning in 1997. (GAO/HEHSS-95-151; 9/6/95)

Medicare Waivers. Worked with Oakland and San Francisco's On Lok to obtain 'waivers' from the Health Care Financing

Administration. These waivers will support the replication of more long-term care programs modeled on the highly successful On Lok experience.

Medical Savings Accounts. Stark is the leading critic of this proposal, and helped obtain studies from CBO, the Joint Economic committee minority staff, the Joint committee on Taxation, the Academy of Actuaries and others exposing the fact that rather than saving Medicare money, MSAs will cost the system billions in extra spending (\$4.6 billion over seven years).

Veto of 1st Budget/Medicare Reconciliation bill. Organized letters to the President explaining the severe impact of the Republican Medicare bill on California's teaching hospitals and on consumer protections in Medicare and Medicaid. Publicly urged the President to veto the bill.

Increasing Medicare's Drug Efficiency. Based on his review of medical literature, Stark wrote letters to HCFA urging Medicare to allow coverage of inexpensive drugs which, when combined with a more expensive immunosuppressive drug provided to kidney transplant patients, increases the efficiency of the expensive drug and could reduce the required dosage, thus saving millions of dollars annually. A similar proposal was made for the subcutaneous administration of EPO for kidney patients, a proposal which could save over \$100 million annually. Medicare is currently considering these proposals.

Saving Medicare's Money. Helped uncover a flaw in Medicare regulations which requires Medicare to pay higher than necessary prices for certain chemotherapy drugs. The Medicare agency is in a process of correcting regulations which will save Medicare millions of dollars.

Catching Medicare Looters. Stark's request to General Accounting Office's Office of Special Investigations led to undercover work on the hiding place of Miguel Recarey and his resultant arrest in Spain. Recarey had looted a Medicare HMO of up to \$100 million in the mid-80's and fled the country. GAO's work resulted in recommendations for improving how US law enforcement agencies pursue international fugitives. (See GAO report OSI-95-7)

Medicare Part A Buy-In. Stark introduced H.R. 3591, which provides Medicare Part A Hospital Insurance buy-in relief for certain individuals who, through no fault of their own, were not able to participate in the Medicare program and have received no help from their former employers in buying into the Medicare program in their retirement years. The bill will help about 30,000 people, generally retired school teachers and other public servants, whose governmental unit did not participate in Medicare.

Northern California Cancer Center - Union City: \$37,802 research grant awarded by the National Cancer Center.

California State University - Hayward: \$101, 664 awarded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NIH) for the Thiazolidinediones and the Vascular Myocyte Metabolism project.

Alameda County Health Care Service Agency - Alameda County: \$77,345.33 awarded by the Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau (NIH) for the Oakland Head Start Program.

Family Health Foundation of Alviso - Alviso: \$495,549 continuation of an award by the Health Resources and Services Administration for the Community Health Center.

Child Family and Community Services, Inc. - Fremont: \$585,225 Early Head Start grant to assist 75 low-income families in Southern Alameda County with pregnant women and children under the age of three.

Alameda County Health Care Services Agency - Alameda County: \$2,272.70 grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau for Oakland Healthy Start.

Ark of Refuge, Inc. - Alameda County: \$740,020 Supportive Housing Program Grant to convert a housing site for people with AIDS and other disabilities into a licensed residential care facility for the chronically ill.

County of Alameda and City of Berkeley: \$1,483,740 Supportive Housing Program grant for Shelter Plus Care housing and services for people with AIDS. This grant expands resources specifically for 35 additional households affected by AIDS and related disorders.

Environment (top)

Headwaters Forest. Led the U.S. House effort in organizing groups to propose a 'debt-for-nature' swap to save the old growth Redwoods of the Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County, California. Headwaters is the largest unprotected stand of old-growth redwood left in the world. Also helped to lead the fight to protect Headwaters Forest during the 1997 Interior spending bill -- stripped a provision from the bill that would have circumvented the Endangered Species Act and allowed logging.

Logging Without Laws. Worked to repeal the timber salvage rider through the House of Representatives floor debate and wrote letters to the President urging administrative repeal.

Endangered Species Funding. Worked with Democratic coalition to preserve federal funding for endangered species under the National Marine Fisheries Service (federal funds had been cut by 45%) in the 1997 Commerce spending bill. Stark sponsored amendment restoring funding for the endangered species programs and the language was included in the final bill.

Dolphin-Safe Tuna. Worked to protect the integrity of the label for dolphin-safe tuna against a Republican-lead effort to weaken the label. Co-sponsored HR 2856 to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to uphold the integrity of tuna labeling and support the International Dolphin Conservation Program; urged the Ways and Means committee to consider an amendment on label integrity. The bill was not enacted.

The Green Tax. Testified at tax reform hearings on the proposal to lower taxes on labor and increase taxes on pollutants. Submitted testimony to Ways and Means committee during hearings on flat tax on why a "Green Tax" system would help reduce long-range environmental problems and increase US productivity.

Consumer Right to Know. Fought for consumer "right-to-know" protection in the Safe Drinking Water Act. The protection will require that water utilities notify their customers when their water is contaminated, and Stark's letter to conference committee helped ensure that the language was included.

Making Polluters Pay. Co-sponsored "Polluter Pays" legislation, which would shift pollution clean-up costs away from taxpayers to polluting companies and co-sponsored legislation which would allow water utilities to sue polluters for the costs of water cleanup.

Polluted Sites. Co-sponsored the "Brownfields Economic Development Act," which targets existing funds for the redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites for commercial use. Supported City of Oakland's efforts to obtain \$100,000 grant from the EPA for assessment and cleanup of abandoned and contaminated sites.

San Francisco Bay Wildlife Society - Newark: \$3,000 award of EPA funds to this non-profit organization to support the approved Environmental Education project.

Labor (top)

Minimum Wage Increase. Raising the minimum wage to \$5.15 per hour. Stark requested a Joint Economic committee analysis which documented that there is no job loss when there are increases in the minimum wage.

The "TEAM" Act. Voted to protect union rights from employer-dominated "teams" and against legislation allowing employers to substitute compensatory time for overtime pay.

Livable Wage for Federal Workers. Co-sponsored legislation which would require a livable wage for federal workers, contractors and subcontractors.

Summer Jobs Program. Wrote a letter to the President to support funding the 1996 Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP). In turn, the President requested that Congress provide \$635 million for the SYETP, providing over 530,000 of our nation's disadvantaged young adults with the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to compete in today's world.

Stop Pentagon-Subsidized Layoffs at Defense Companies. Co-sponsored legislation to end "payoffs for layoffs" -- cutting off funds that encourage defense companies to merge and "downsize."

Alameda County Private Industry Council: \$2,134,357 through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to fund a project for workers affected by closures and layoffs at the following locations: the Kellogg Corporation (San Leandro), Permer Control, Lucky's Warehouse, First Nationwide Bank, and Alameda County Healthcare.

Key Labor Votes:

"TEAM" Act
No

Minimum Wage Increase
Yes

ICC Termination/Labor Protections
Yes

Cutting Workplace Safety Funds
No

Stripping OSHA Ergonomic Standards
No

Taxes and Budget (top)

Tax Exempt Organizations Reform Bill. HR 2316, the Tax Exempt Organizations Reform bill (cited by US News and World Report in its issue exploring abuses in charities) is designed to prevent directors and other insiders in tax exempt organizations from profiting by conversion of such organizations to taxable entities. Stark's bill is supported by the Clinton Administration as a needed tax reform. The bill is particularly important in the health field as more and more HMOs convert from not-for-profits to for-profits. This bill was enacted as part of the Taxpayers Bill of Rights.

Low-Cost Insurance for Charities. Co-sponsored HR 1299, a bill to change the tax laws to allow charitable organizations to form risk pools to provide low cost insurance to small community non-profit organizations. This bill was enacted as part of the Small Business/Minimum Wage bill.

Modify Tax Laws for Long-Term Health Care Insurance. Co-sponsored HR 1457, a bill to clarify tax treatment of long-term care insurance contracts so that tax-free treatment would be available for payments from policies meeting consumer safeguards. Favorable tax treatment was enacted as part of the Kassebaum-Kennedy bill.

Federal Reserve Policy. Led House of Representatives lobbying to influence Federal Reserve to ease monetary policy during the slow growth period of 1995. Stark requested a study by the Joint Economic committee to determine why economic growth in 1995 was slow. The Republican-controlled Congress wanted to blame the 1993 Budget Resolution that had reduced the federal deficit by balancing spending cuts and tax changes. The study showed that 90 percent of the tax increases fell on families with incomes above \$100,000, while half the families had tax reductions. Yet, consumption by high income families increased because of new economic growth the deficit reduction created. So the slowdown's culprit was not tax policy, but the Federal Reserve's actions to tighten the money supply, making it more difficult for businesses to finance investment, and consumers to buy homes and cars. Stark used the report in debating for Federal Reserve changes. In the end, the Federal Reserve did lower interest rates.

Protected Collection of Government Statistics. Stark requested a study from the Joint Economic committee to learn the effect of the government shutdown on getting and reporting such basic information as the unemployment rate, population, and national economic performance. The study helped raise concerns that protected data collection activities during the protracted budget process.

Protecting Social Security Recipients. Led fight to protect the elderly during debate on the Balanced Budget Amendment. Stark requested a study from the Joint Economic committee to show how the Republican Balanced Budget Amendment would have increased poverty rates for the elderly. Though the proposal passed the House of Representatives, Stark's issues were useful in defeating the amendment in the Senate.

Trade, Foreign Affairs and Human Rights (top)

China MFN. Opposed extending Most Favored Nation (MFN) status to China (H.J. Res. 182) in the Ways and Means committee and on the House of Representatives floor based on China's dreadful human rights records, use of child and prison labor, nuclear proliferation, gun running, and the US/China trade imbalance.

Human Rights in China. Helped organize Congressional protests against China's arrest of Milpitas resident Harry Wu. Nominated Mr. Wu for Nobel Peace Prize for 1996 for exposing atrocious conditions in China's political prison systems.

NAFTA Withdrawal. Supported legislation (HR 499) to require withdrawal of the US from the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and to document the ill effects of NAFTA on our country (HR 2651).

Nuclear Non-Proliferation. Stark offered an amendment to deny Generalized System of Preferences (HR 1653) to nations which do not cooperate in anti-nuclear proliferation efforts. The amendment was approved in the Ways and Means committee and the House of Representatives as part of the Budget Reconciliation bill, but was dropped in Conference with Senate because of the Byrd Rule. Stark will continue to urge adoption.

Human Rights in Turkey. Helped protect Kani Xulem, a dedicated advocate of the Kurdish minority in Turkey, by writing letter urging that his request for political asylum be granted. Kani would have been in serious danger if he had returned to Turkey. In his letter to his supporters in Congress, Kani said that Congressional action had "saved his life."

Lori Beilenson Trial. Wrote to the Peruvian government urging a new trial of Lori Beilenson, an American woman jailed in Peru for political reasons.

Emmanuel Constant Letter. Wrote a letter to Secretary of State Warren Christopher calling for a trial for Emmanuel Constant, head of Haiti's most violent paramilitary group, and urging US support for more aggressive investigation of all human rights violations in Haiti.

Crime and Guns (top)

Civilian Marksmanship Program Gun Giveaway. Co-sponsored legislation (HR 3466) to eliminate the Civilian Marksmanship Program and prohibit the \$76 million in Army gun giveaways that was tucked into the Defense Authorization bill for target-shooters.

Church Burnings. Co-sponsored H. Con Res 183 condemning church arson. This bill passed the House of Representatives.

Handguns. Co-sponsored HR 250, to prohibit the possession or transfer of non-sporting handguns and "Saturday Night Specials."

Junk Guns. Co-sponsored HR 3652, the Junk Gun Violence Protection Act, to ban guns preferred by criminals, specifically those that are inexpensive, easily concealable, lack adequate safety devices, and are made of inferior materials. Because of the relatively low accuracy and high failure rates, these guns are unsuitable for hunting and self-defense.

Veterans (top)

Richard Sakakida Letter. Wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Army, urging the Army to request to posthumously award the Medal of Honor to the late Colonel Richard Sakakida of Fremont for his heroism in the Philippines during World War II.

Merchant Marine Active Service. Co-sponsored HR 44 to provide that certain service of members of the United States Merchant Marine during World War II constituted active military service for purposes of any law administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Medicare Subvention. Co-sponsored HR 3012, which permits Medicare eligible beneficiaries under the military health care system to enroll in the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). Through the FEHBP, the government pays approximately 72% of the premium, and the retiree pays the rest. The FEHBP works in conjunction with Medicare. This legislation grants military retirees the option to join the same plan enjoyed by Federal employees and retirees, and Members of Congress.

Housing (top)

Child Care Health and Safety Standards Amendment. Offered an amendment during the welfare bill subcommittee mark-up, to ensure that existing health and safety requirements including immunization, building and physical premises safety, and minimum health and safety training for providers, were not repealed. The amendment passed by unanimous consent.

Medicaid for Families with Dependent Children. Stark offered an amendment to guarantee that poor families who would have qualified for AFDC wouldn't lose their Medicaid under the new Republican proposal. Although the amendment was ultimately defeated, the majority party committed to guaranteeing this important health coverage for the poor. A similar proposal was included in the final welfare reform bill, signed into law by President Clinton in August.

Exclude Veterans and Taxpaying Immigrants from Welfare Reform. Stark offered an amendment in committee which would exclude veterans and legal immigrants who paid taxes for at least five years from the Republican welfare bill. Under the Republican bill, legal immigrants would be excluded from most benefits. Although the amendment was defeated in committee, the majority party included similar language in their final bill which was signed into law by President Clinton in August.

Education and Training. Stark voted in committee to require that states provide necessary education, training and support services before cutting families off welfare. The amendment was defeated by the majority party.

Equal Protection for All Children. Stark voted in committee to assure basic protections for and equal treatment of children. The amendment would have made certain that children were not left holding the bag if the state ran out of Federal money. The amendment would have prevented states from arbitrarily cutting benefits -- by treating two children in similar circumstances differently -- if funds ran out. The amendment was defeated by the majority party.

Safe Foster Homes. Stark fought for an amendment in committee which assured that a safe foster home would be available for each neglected or abused child. The amendment would have maintained the foster care maintenance payments and adoption assistance payments to ensure that abused and neglected children could be placed in foster or adoptive homes. Although the amendment was defeated, much of the language was ultimately included in the final welfare bill and is now law.

Hold States Accountable for Foster Care. Stark fought for an amendment which would have assured the safety of children in foster care and would have held states accountable for deaths in foster care. The amendment would have subjected states, who are found by a court to have neglected children in their custody, to an annual review and the development and implementation of a remedial plan. The amendment was rejected by the majority party.

Protection for Disabled Children. Stark supported and fought for an amendment in committee to preserve Supplemental Security Income benefits for certain severely disabled children. The amendments was rejected by the majority party.

Child Support Enforcement. Stark fought for an amendment in committee which assured nationwide use of an effective child support enforcement tool -- suspension of professional, recreational, and drivers' license -- of those deadbeat parents who refuse to enter into an agreement to pay child support. Although the amendment was defeated in committee, similar language was included in the final welfare bill which is now current law.

Welfare Reform for Deficit Reduction. Stark voted for an amendment which would require that all savings from welfare reform be put toward deficit reduction instead of tax breaks for the wealthy. The amendment was defeated by the majority party.

The McKinney Act. Wrote a letter to the committee on Banking and Financial Services objecting to language added to the Public Housing Reform and Empowerment Act that eliminates the McKinney law's right of first refusal to homeless groups for surplus properties. This provision would have reversed the long-held ability to transfer surplus government property to persons who provide services to homeless people.

ECHO - Hayward: \$20,000 FY 1996 Housing Counseling Program Award, a competitive grant to provide housing counseling for one year to homebuyers, homeowners, and renters.

California State University - Hayward: \$194,355 awarded by the Department of Education under the Urban Community Service program to work with community groups to resolve severe community programs.

Center for Employment Training - San Jose: \$150,000 School-to-Work grant to help the San Jose community to accelerate their efforts to serve school dropouts and to develop new ways of involving out-of-school youth in School-to-Work initiatives.

Santa Clara Housing Authority - San Jose: \$935,943 Public Housing Modernization (HUD) grant to improve the physical condition of properties and at the same time upgrade the management and operation of the projects to continue to be available to low-income families.

Emergency Housing Consortium - San Jose: \$1,715,313 Supportive Housing Program grant to assist homeless providers in acquiring, building, renovating and operating facilities that serve homeless families and individuals and to offer homeless people the housing and supportive services they need to achieve independent living.

Alameda County Housing and Development: \$472,831 Supportive Housing Program grant to assist homeless providers in acquiring, building, renovating and operating facilities that serve homeless families and individuals and to offer homeless people the housing and supportive services they need to achieve independent living.

The Bridge Counseling Center, Inc. - Santa Clara County: \$850,000 Supportive Housing Program grant to assist homeless providers in acquiring, building, renovating and operating facilities that serve homeless families and individuals and to offer homeless people the housing and supportive services they need to achieve independent living.

Fred Finch's Children's Home, Inc. - Alameda County: \$2,169,771 Supportive Housing Program grant to provide transitional housing and support services to homeless youth and their families and will create 14 new housing units.

Ark of Refuge, Inc. - Alameda County: \$740,020 771 Supportive Housing Program grant to convert a housing site for people with AIDS and other disabilities into a licensed residential care facility for the chronically ill.

County of Alameda and City of Berkeley: \$1,483,740 Supportive Housing Program grant for Shelter Plus Care housing and services for people with AIDS. This grant expands resources specifically for 35 additional households affected by AIDS and related disorders.

Unity Village - Alameda Naval Air Station: Unspecified amount of funds to this Native American-focused housing program. United Indian Nations will provide transitional and permanent housing for Native American youth, veterans, singles and families at the converted base facility. The project will create 12 new units and serve 55 individuals and families.

San Jose Development Corporation: \$500,000 HHS Office of Community Services grant to research and develop the Job Opportunities for Low Income Individuals (JOLI) program.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County - San Jose: \$161,250 HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement for discretionary

social services.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, Immigration, Refugee and Youth Division - San Jose: \$35,000 HHS Office of Community Services grant for family violence prevention and services.

Education (top)

CUEREC. Worked with CSU-Hayward to obtain a second year of federal funding for the California Urban Environmental Research & Education Center (CUEREC). CUEREC is in the process of linking the California State University system with the University of California system to research and develop solutions for the employment and environmental problems of California.

Tax-Free Employer-Provided Education. Co-sponsored HR 127, a bill to allow tax-free treatment of employer-provided education assistance. Joined other Democrats in a letter to the Ways and Means Chairman to include this bill in the Small Business Tax bill. Favorable tax treatment was enacted as part of the Small Business/Minimum Wage bill.

Fighting for Schools. Voted against a series of majority party budget bills that slashed education by billions of dollars.

GOALS 2000. Fought to preserve national education standards and voted to preserve the GOALS 2000 program.

California State University - Hayward: \$45,000 EPA assistance awarded for public-private partnership.

California State University - Hayward: \$101, 664 awarded by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NIH) for the Thiazolidinediones and the Vascular Myocyte Metabolism project.

California State University - Hayward: \$194,355 awarded by the Department of Education under the Urban Community Service program to work with community groups to resolve severe community problems.

Fremont Unified School District: An unspecified amount of funding awarded under Bilingual Education: Systemwide Improvement Grants program to implement a districtwide bilingual education program to improve, reform and upgrade relevant student programs.

Women's Issues (top)

ERA Support. Co-sponsored H. Res. 30, which provides that upon passage by three additional states (Virginia, Florida, and Illinois), the House of Representatives will take whatever action necessary to ensure the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. With this resolution, based upon the precedent-setting ratification of the Madison (27th) Amendment in 1992, the enactment of the ERA is in sight.

RU-486 Letter. Wrote a letter to FDA Commissioner David Kessler urging him to act favorably and promptly on the pending application for FDA approval of Mifepristone, or RU-486.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Act of 1996. Co-sponsored legislation to provide working women and the federal government with important weapons in the fight against sexual harassment. Women who are not currently protected from sexual harassment under federal law will be provided with a civil remedy against harassers, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) will be given a funding increase consistent with the President's request.

Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Co-sponsored H. Res. 220, a resolution urging the Senate to ratify CEDAW, the U.N. Convention against all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Alameda County Health Care Service Agency: \$77,345.33 awarded by the Health Resources and Services Administration Maternal and Child Health Bureau (NIH) for the Oakland Health Start program.

City of Fremont: \$250,000 for the Shelter Against Violent Environments (S.A.V.E.) to provide domestic violence training with a community-oriented policing philosophy.

Child, Family and Community Services, Inc. - Fremont: \$585,225 Early Head Start grant to assist 75 low-income families in Southern Alameda county with pregnant women and children under age three.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, Immigration, Refugee and Youth Divisions - San Jose: \$35,000 HHS Office of Community Services grant for family violence prevention and services

Key Women's Issues Votes

Abortion procedure restrictions
No

Federal embryo research

Yes

Require approval for family planning

No

Abortion procedure veto override

Yes

Immigration (top)

Friends-of-Court Brief. Stark joined over 50 Senators and Representatives in an amicus brief to the United States Supreme Court, in opposition to "Official English" laws. The brief upholds Stark's belief that official English legislation violates elected officials' First Amendment rights to communicate with their constituents in the language their constituents understand.

Social Security Card Upgrade. Stark co-sponsored HR 3724, which would replace today's flimsy paper social security card with one offering the best possible security against counterfeiting, forgery, alteration, and fraudulent use. This will help cut down illegal immigration by making employer sanctions work better.

Fauziya Kasinga Letter. Wrote a letter to Doris Meissner, INS Commissioner, in support of Ms. Fauziya Kasinga, who is seeking political asylum on the grounds that she fled her homeland to avoid female genital mutilation. The letter supports a cohesive political asylum policy and would set precedent in this area for the nation's immigration judges. As a result of Stark's intervention, the INS has released Ms. Kasinga from detention.

Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County - San Jose: \$161,250 HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement grant for discretionary social services.

Fremont Unified School District: An unspecified amount awarded under the Bilingual Education: Systemwide Improvement Grants program to implement a districtwide bilingual program to improve, reform, and upgrade relevant student programs.

Federal Employees (top)

NATCA letter. Originated a bi-partisan letter to Secretary Peña on behalf of National Air Traffic Controllers Association requesting that the Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) and BAY Terminal Radar Approach Control

(TRACON) be included in the FAA's pay incentive program. As a result, the controllers at these hard-to-staff facilities received a 7% pay raise on April 1, and a full 10% increase starting Oct. 1.

Modify Tax Laws for Government Pensioners. Co-sponsored HR 1504, a bill to allow modification of pension rules for government employees. The change will prevent California state and local government pension plans from losing their tax-exempt status when they make payments that exceed a pension law formula -- a concern arising from payments to workers such as firefighters and policemen who are disabled early in their career and whose COLA over time may bring the pension payment in excess of 100% of their salary when they were able to work. Favorable tax treatment was enacted as part of the Small Business/Minimum Wage bill.

Consumers' Rights (top)

Office of Consumer Affairs Letter. Wrote a letter to the VA, HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations conferees, requesting the reversal of the termination of the Office of Consumer Affairs, the only federal entity which serves as a consumer advocate at the national level.

Consumer Protections in Managed Care. Organized and held Congressional Forum on the need for consumer protections in managed care plans. Proposals from the Forum are being included in various Republican and Democratic managed care reform bills.

Prohibit ATM-User Ripoffs. Co-sponsored legislation to limit fees on electronic transfer of funds.

Natural Disasters (top)

Natural Disaster Protection Act Letter. Wrote a letter to the Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure committee, urging early action of the Natural Disaster Protection Act, which provides for an expanded federal program of hazard mitigation, relief, and insurance against the risk of catastrophic natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and volcanic eruptions.

Bay Area Issues (top)

Blue Cross/Blue Shield Charity. Stark joined with consumer groups in California successfully urging that the for-profit spin off of Blue Cross/Blue Shield result in establishment of an independent charity to serve Californians and to compensate for years of tax-exemption.

Alameda County Health Care. Assisted Alameda County in applying for a critical Sec. 1115 waiver which will enable the County to restructure its health care system. By facilitating meetings with leading officials at the Health Care Financing Administration and by writing letters of support, Stark assisted Alameda County in applying for federal matching funds for care to the indigent in freestanding clinics and hospital outpatient settings.

Environmental Finance Center. Obtained funding for the Environmental Finance Center (EFC) at CSU-Hayward. The EFC helps local governments and small businesses meet environmental demands by providing financial training and analytical services.

Alviso Slough Derelict Boats. Helped organize local, state and Federal government agencies to solve the problem of derelict and abandoned boats in the Alviso Slough. These boats were creating environmental and public health problems in the Bay; the cleanup has already begun.

Wastewater Reclamation. Assisted Alameda County Water District and Union Sanitary District in a wastewater reclamation project that would lessen drinking water shortages and minimize discharge into the San Francisco Bay.

San Leandro Marina. Secured federal funding in the House of Representatives Energy & Water Appropriations bill for the dredging of the marina at San Leandro. The funding was contained in the final omnibus appropriations bill.

Alameda Library Application. The Alameda library requested Stark's assistance in securing expedited approval by Internal Revenue Service of the application for non-profit status of its literacy foundation. The application was granted in time for the foundation to receive a grant from a major donor, enabling a literacy project for the County to be funded.

Don Edwards Wildlife Refuge. Stark helped dedicate the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in honor of his long-time colleague, former Congressman Don Edwards. Mr. Edwards was a champion of the refuge and was instrumental in its creation and expansion.

NUMMI Plant. In the US-Japan auto trade dispute, Stark worked with United States Trade Representative Ambassador Kantor to ensure that parts needed by NUMMI to maintain production would not be adversely affected, thus helping ensure job stability for NUMMI's Fremont plant.

Earthquake Safety. Helped Fremont be designated as one of the cities selected for special training by the Federal Emergency Management Agency on how to combat earthquake and fire disasters.

CPU Technology Grant. Helped Fremont company CPU Technology win \$750,000 grant from the Department of Defense to develop new computer communications techniques.

Suisan Bay Signal Flags. Helped San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park receive free signal flags for dressing the ships. This idea came from constituent Robert C. Burns of San Leandro, who urged use of flags from the Suisan Bay Reserve Fleet.

Parent-Child Center Grant. Supported grant application for Oakland's East Bay Perinatal Council to the Department of Health and Human Services for a Parent-Child Center.

Oakland Harbor Deepening. Worked with the Bay Area delegation to achieve agreement on deepening of the Oakland Harbor and the disposal of the dredged materials. A deeper harbor will allow more modern shipping to use the port, creating thousands of jobs.

Port Chicago Apology. Stark helped organize letters to President Clinton urging pardon of sailors court-martialed after the Port Chicago ammo ship explosion in World War II, after which sailors were convicted in a racially-charged trial. While not pardoned, the Secretary of the Navy has issued an apology to the sailors.

Children's Health and Safety Shower. In June, 1996, Stark organized a Children's Health and Safety Shower designed to provide information to parents and grandparents so that they can provide a safe environment -- both inside the home and outside -- for children. In addition, the event was designed to connect parents and young children with government and community service agencies that provide a wide variety of resources including child care services and in-home safety information. Over thirty service agencies including the US Consumer Product Safety Commission, local hospitals and local police and fire departments were present giving parents and their kids important information about health recreation and safety. The event was attended by over three hundred parents and children and many expressed a hope that the fair would become an annual event.

Women's Issues Town Meeting. In honor of Women's History Month, Stark hosted a district-wide town meeting to discuss issues of interest to women. Among the groups represented were the National Women's Political Caucus, the American Association of University Women, the National Organization of Women, and the League of Women Voters. Stark covered a wide range of issues from the Violence Against Women Act to deleting the ban on abortion-related speech from the internet obscenity law.

High School Art Competition. Stark and the Hayward Arts Council sponsored the 13th Congressional District High School Art Competition in which 27 high schools submitted 54 entries. The winning pastel, entitled "Tulips" by Elizabeth Boim of San Leandro High School, will be displayed in the halls of the US Capitol until June 1997.

District Case Work (top)

Stark's Fremont office processed approximately 2,000 cases to date in the 104th Congress. Major areas of casework

include: help with social security, IRS questions, visa applications, federal retiree problems, immigration and workers' compensation.

EXAMPLES:

A 25-year old naturalized citizen and Fremont resident lost her naturalization certificate. In trying to obtain a duplicate, she was told that the Immigration and Naturalization Service had no record of her naturalization. Due to leave to teach English at a technical university in China in two weeks, Stark's office was able to obtain her proof of citizenship and a passport from the State Department in less than a week.

A Russian family of four, two parents and a set of twin girls, was issued immigrant visas because they were escaping religious persecution. Due to illness, one daughter and the father remained in Russia. The mother, along with the other daughter, left Russia and settled in Fremont. The Embassy refused to issue the daughter who had become sick a visa. After correspondence between our office and the Embassy, visas were finally issued to the father and his daughter. The family was once again reunited.

In Their Own Words (top)

"On behalf of the board of directors and staff of the Nonprofits' Insurance Alliance of California (NIAC), and our nearly 1,500 nonprofit organization member-insureds, we extend our deepest gratitude to you for your efforts to help us obtain the appropriate tax status for NAIC...Most of our member-insureds are small, grassroots organizations working within their communities to make life better for all of us. We are grateful to know that within the machine that is our federal government, there remains a heart for accomplishing these small, but important, changes in our laws." -- Jess Gutierrez, Chairman, NIAC and Pamela Davis, President/CEO NIAC

"I am tremendously grateful for your vote against the Defense of Marriage Act. Above and beyond your understanding of fairness and equality, you stood up against the politics of the moment to do what was right. Your vote against this unconstitutional, unnecessary, and blatantly discriminatory measure stands as a testament of hope in spite of the number of votes this bill received." -- Eugene M., Union City

"In this day and age, it's nice to know there is someone you can count on." -- Betty M., Hayward

"Your office sets a high standard for responsiveness and it's appreciated." -- Charles D., Newark

"Thank you very much for everything you've done to enable me to get my citizenship. I recently took the test and passed. My family and I celebrated after the oath - I am now a US citizen. We are all very happy to have seen this day, especially my husband. We appreciate all your help. Thank you very much." -- Herta L., Fremont

"We recently asked for your assistance on delay of payment by the I.R.S.; since contacting your office we promptly received our 1994 tax refund. We would just like to thank you and your staff again for your help in this matter." -- John and Melissa G., Union City

"You've been in the minority in Congress in standing fast for your valuing of equity and social justice, even in "fat" times for the Democrats, and your voice is even a more lonely one in those halls these days. However, you are definitely not alone and you help me feel that I'm not alone -- for which I'm deeply grateful." -- Delmo D., Hayward

"It was indeed heartening to note the prompt and courteous response from your office, and your personal involvement and interest. For me, this is much more valuable than any higher level services a representative of the people can offer. I appreciate your genuine concern for the people of your district." -- Nandini P., Fremont

"Your help allows us to continue providing life-enriching experiences to the people of Northern California who have made KQED the most-watched public television station and one of the most-listened-to public radio stations in the nation. We appreciate your past support and look forward to working with you in the future." -- Mary Bitterman, President and CEO, KQED, Inc.

Awards (top)

American Psychological Association: Received "Distinguished Contribution to the Profession by a Non-Psychologist Award." March 24, 1995 .

American Public Health Association: Received the Dr. Henrik Blum Award for "Distinguished Service in Health Policy Development." October 30, 1995.

Latinos Unidos Cinco De Mayo: Senior Meals and Entertainment (award for Stark's efforts on behalf of low-income seniors), 1996.

Tri-City Treats: Fremont - Union City - Newark, Silver Sponsor, Nourishing the Children, 1996.

Arts in Schools, Newark, CA: Appreciation Award, 1995 & 1996

Fremont Education Foundation: Support of Quality Education, Spring 1995

Tri-City Elder Coalition: In Appreciation, 1996

San Leandro Unified School district: Friends of Education, March 28, 1996

American Association of Kidney Patients and American Kidney Foundation: Legislator of the Year, 1995.

Accomplishments Archive

108th, 107th, 106th and 105th Congresses